

By the PEOPLE, A

DECLARATION.



WE the Nobility, Gentry and Commonalty, of the Kingdom of *England*; and more particularly of the Four Northern Counties thereof; together with many of the true and faithful Clergy of the Church of *England* established by Law, besides

those of other Denominations not a few; being at Heart sensible of the Calamities, which at this time threaten this Kingdom, unless some effectual and speedy Remedy be taken for preventing the same; do think it our Duty, both as Englishmen and as Christians, to endeavour what in us lies, the healing of the present Distempers of the Nation, and the putting an end to our lamentable Distractions in Church and State; by restoring and establishing all things for the benefit of ourselves and our Posterity, upon the only sure and lasting Foundation of Truth and Righteousness, without Respect to any Persons or Parties whatsoever, but only to the Glory of God, and to the general Welfare and Ease of all the States of this Realm. And therefore inasmuch as it is evident to all Men, that the Publick Peace and Happiness cannot be preserved in any State or Kingdom, where the Laws, Liberties and Customs, established by the rightful and lawful Authority in it are openly transgressed, suspended and annulled; and more especially where a considerable Part of the Natives are illegally grieved, harassed and oppressed, and deprived of the Protection, which is due to them from the Sovereign: We look upon ourselves as indispensably bound, by all proper Ways and Means, to maintain, and defend the established Laws, Liberties and Customs, of our Country, both Civil and Religious, against all Invasions, Usurpations and Pretensions whatsoever.

Now whereas this Kingdom hath been miserably Rent and Torn for many Years past, by the unhappy Disputes betwixt Hereditary and Parliamentary Right, and the Consciences of People were much disturbed by several Titles being put up, as heretofore during the Dissension of the Houses of *York* and *Lancaster*, and the several Reasons or Claims of Allegiance to the present Powers, being very different, if not also contrary to each other, and that of the most eminent Manager of the Revolution and present Settlement, condemned and burnt by Authority of Parliament; we could heartily have wished to have seen before this an End put to our Dissensions and Confusions, by wise and grave Counsels being taken; and while the Throne was filled with a Princess of an English Spirit and Interest, we could not be without Hopes of having this effected by the happy Re-union of what had been so long divided. But whereas immediately upon Her Demise, this having been left undone, the whole Body almost of the Nation thought fit to acquiesce for the present in what had been done, without disputing the Legality thereof, as having bound themselves thereto by solemn Engagements: And so according to certain Acts of Settlement limiting the Crown to the Heirs of the Body of the late Excellent Princess *Sophia*, being Pro-

testants, they did by Virtue thereof Proclaim and Recognize his Electoral Highness *George Lewis* her Son, by the Stile and Title of *George I. King of Great Britain, &c.*

And whereas the said *George Lewis* Elector of *Brunswick* did accept the same accordingly by virtue of the said Acts, with all the Limitations and Restrictions thereunto annexed, at the Demand of the Free States of these Realms; for which end he also scrupled, not for the better qualifying himself to change his Religion, so soon as he arrived here, and outwardly to conform to the Church of *England*: The Person pretending to be, and taking upon Himself the Stile and Title of King of *England*, by the Name of *James III.* as by Hereditary Right, being then attainted and excluded (as hath been usually done in Times past with all Pretenders of the Blood Royal) by several Acts made against Him, for securing, as we were made to believe, the Nation, against the Fears of our Religion being altered, or our Liberties invaded: And whereas moreover there was a Parliament then sitting, from which it was generally expected by as many as had submitted themselves, that all Matters would have been established to the entire Satisfaction both of King and Parliament, as well as of the whole Kingdom, according to the Declaration of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, assembled at *Westminster*, on the Twelfth Day of *February*, 1688. and according to the several Acts thereupon since made, for securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject, as well as for settling the Succession of the Crown as now it is, to the Exclusion therefrom of the said Persons claiming and pretending by Proximity of Blood as aforesaid; and of all others holding Communion with the See or Church of *Rome.* And notwithstanding this very Parliament had exerted themselves so signally for their New King, more than any other Parliament had ever done for any other King or Queen of this Realm before him, and generously settled upon him for Life the Sum of 700000 *l.* Yearly, which Sum was also capable of being further advanced, to maintain his Household; yet it is notorious how they were not only disregarded and slighted for all that they had done, but even openly affronted and exposed, how they were not so much as allowed a Seat at the Coronation as under that Capacity, or the very poor Gratification of a Medal, and how that after a great many Prorogations they were at last ignominiously sent Home, without having had the Favor so much as once to meet his Majesty, tho' it is plain there wanted not during that Time many great and arduous Matters, very fit to be consider'd of by the great Council of the Nation, which the evil Ministers and Counsellors durst not trust, and therefore studied by all means to prevent and hinder. Yea so implacable indeed was the Malice of those Men, who now thought themselves secure of all, by being possessed of the King's Person; as they were not ashamed, immediately upon his very landing, when there was a general flocking to *Greenwich* of Persons of Rank and Quality to make their Congratulations and Acknowledgments of Fealty, with wishes of an auspicious Reign, to make opprobrious Distinctions, as if he were to be King of a Party only, and insolently to ridicule, villify and abuse such, as had made themselves to be remarked either for their inviolable Fidelity to the late Queen, for the Love of their Country, or for their Zeal for
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the Church of England. And it is well known how one of our Representatives, having hereby distinguished himself, was barbarously here insulted, without Respect either to the Privilege of Parliament, or to the Royal Presence itself, and afterwards inhumanly Murther'd; and how the Murtherer for the same was not only acquitted by the Industry and Influence of the Faction, but hath also been rewarded and preferr'd, for an encouragement to such like Assassins; and how Mony was likewise very early given, in a most scandalous manner, upon the Heads of some of the Nobility by the Partizans of this most wicked Combination against our Laws and Liberties; and particularly by one who is a Forreigner by Birth, and who hath been since created a Baronet for his great Merit in this Cause, which was for insuring the Death of those Noble Lords by a Time certain.

Neither is it unknown what a Conspiracy was from the beginning unnaturally carried on by some at Home, in Conjunction with some Abroad, against the Lives and Properties of many of the Lords and Commons: And how some of the best English Blood was to be made the Cement of new Foreign Alliances. Whence as if they had no other way to fortify themselves in their ill-gotten Places and Wealth, and to divide the Spoils of their Fellow-Subjects among them; these Traytors to the King and Kingdom had resolv'd to begin their Administration with Axes and Halters: That so all honest Men being either terrify'd or destroy'd, they might do whatever they please undisturbed. Thus studying to run in all things counter to the gentle and merciful Government of a most Gracious Prince, whose Heart we found to be entirely English; and therefore, as we believe, chiefly because it was so much English, they decreed to stop at nothing, that might aggrandize themselves, though by the utter Subversion of the English Government, and that very Constitution itself (under the present Limitation as to the Succession) which they would seem so fond of. Whence Foreigners have been admitted to direct our Councils, to the great Discouragement of all true English Hearts and Lovers of their Country; and to dispose of English Preferments and Honours, for which they will always be sure to have some valuable Consideration, finding always Slaves enough to purchase at their Hands. Yea Foreigners have been arm'd to cut our Throats, as in the Time of the *Danes*; and for this End not only those who live amongst us, and whom we have entertained out of Charity, have first by a secret Commission of Array, and since that by a more open one, been enlisted to do our Business for us.

And to crown all in Order thereunto, there was an unprecedented Proclamation publish'd by these Evil Ministers and Counsellors, in the King's Name, thereby maliciously and traiterously making him an Abettor of their wicked Design of overturning the Constitution of Parliaments, the true Bulwark of our English Liberties, contrary to his most solemn Oath at his Coronation, as well as to all their own repeated Declarations and Professions. For in this Proclamation bearing Date on the Seventeenth Day of *January* last, for calling a New Parliament returnable on Monday the Seventeenth Day of *March*, besides the manifest Blunder, which was committed in the Date for the return of the said Parliament, the Seventeenth Day of *March* not falling upon a Monday, but upon a Thursday, as it was afterwards corrected in the later printed Copies;

it is undeniable that there never was any such bare-faced Attempt against the Liberty of Elections, in all the Reigns of the Kings and Queens of this Realm, whether Rightful or Pretended, no not even in the Usurpation of *Oliver* himself; who, tho' the Constitution of Parliament was then quite changed, and was modelled according to the regnant Humour of the Faction, yet did never once presume so much as to direct the Electors, whom he would have them to choose, or to take away from the People their inherent Birthright to represent themselves, by such new and dangerous methods as these now practised contrary to the good ancient Customs, Privileges and Rights of this Realm, and to the Peace and Safety of the same, by promoting Distinctions and Animosities, and violently charging the Administration under the late Queen, and thereby the Queen herself, as well as her most faithful Ministers and Servants; nor only many Persons besides of the best Quality and Character in the Nation unheard, and without the least Proof, but even one half at least of the Common People with Crimes of the highest nature, and such as are made Capital by the present Laws. Neither were these evil Ministers, who had thus grossly abused their Master, and mis-informed him as to Facts, content here; as fearing that this would not be enough of itself to bias the Elections of the then ensuing Parliament, whereby they might be secured in their new acquired Power: But they resolved to prosecute by all manner of means, this their wicked Design of destroying the very Foundations of our Liberty; and of introducing by the Shadow of a Parliament, instead of our good old English Constitution, an arbitrary and military Government, as bad certainly, if not worse than that of *France*, to avoid falling into which, we yet have spent so much Blood and Treasure for these Seven and Twenty Years last past. This now required many Months to effect, the Difficulties which they met with in making their Treason to bear, being found greater than they at first expected; and hence it was so very late in the Year, before they could by all their Arts and Power assemble a Parliament to their mind, that is, such as should represent the Court rather than the People, and should not be able to refuse the many things, which they were willing to ask. But whereas, after all that their Management could do, the stubborn Honesty of many of the Freeholders could not be prevailed on to sell their Country, to sacrifice their old English Laws and Rights, and to gratify the Enemies to the Kingdom; it was not possible to hinder a good number of Honest Gentlemen, Men of a true English Heart, and Worthy Patriots from being return'd among the rest to serve in Parliament: And therefore it was thought necessary by them, having gain'd a Majority in the House of Commons, after their own heart, as being made up chiefly of their own Creatures, to intimidate, if possible, the lesser Number, to abridge them that Liberty of Speech, which is essential to the Constitution of Parliaments, and without which it is impossible that a King can be rightly informed, or advised, or that any evil Minister and Traitor to the King, while in Favour, can be discovered and called to an Account, according to the undoubted Privileges of the Commons of *England*, to debar them of looking into, and examining such Books and Letters, as were in course to be laid before the whole House, that according

cording to ancient Custom every Member might freely compare and judge of the same, without the Help of other Peoples Eyes to see for them, by appointing a certain close and secret Committee for that purpose, after the example of that famous Parliament in 1641, and whose Report, they within, as well as those without-doors, were obliged implicitly to believe upon their Veracity, and authorizing them to extend their Jurisdiction, both over their own Members, and over other Free Men no wise subject to them, after an Arbitrary, Tyrannical and unprecedented manner, expressly contrary to the Law and Custom of Parliaments, before the late rebellious Times, by creating themselves a Court of Judicature, with Power to cite, examine and convict whomsoever they should think fit to mark out, and even setting up an Inquisition, by which the Life, Liberty and Property of every English-man (as well as his Religion) is at stake, which new Inquisition thus set up in a Protestant Country, and consisting of One and Twenty Inquisitors, we protest against as intirely Illegal, Unparliamentary and Tyrannical; declaring that they neither have, nor ever had, nor can have any Authority, by a pretended Power derived to them from the House of Commons, or any other, of citing before them, interrogating by Oath, and punishing by Imprisonment or otherwise, any of the King's Leige Subjects, such only excepted, as are at that time sitting Members of that House, and by the Authority of the whole House conjunctly: And that it is a Duty greatly incumbent on all the Members of that Honourable House to take care of the Liberties, Properties and Safety of the Persons, whose Representatives they are, and not to sell, betray, or any-wise alienate the same, or at least without express Leave first had of those by whom they are sent and constituted. Wherefore we cannot enough detest and abhor the Betrayers of their Country, who have acted so notoriously contrary to their Trust, by introducing such a New and Tyrannical Constitution, and have violated the general Reason and Nature of their being Elected and Commissioned by us, who have acted so much against the Universal Bent of the Nation, have blown up the Coals of Dissension and Discord amongst them, that were before at Peace, have inflamed the whole Kingdom by their Proceedings, have strained and wrested the Laws for a pretended Publick Good, but indeed a Real Evil, have alienated the Minds of multitudes of People from the Affection they first had for the King, whom they had chosen, and for his Family, and have done all that is possible in preparing Matters for a Civil War, in hopes that the Pretenders on both sides being in the Contest either slain, or sentenced by another High Court of Justice, or otherwise, Abdicated for ever, they may erect a Pyramid over the Ruins of Monarchy, and establish again a Common-wealth exactly after the Copy of that in 1649. In order to this, it was deem'd expedient to begin with those, who were of known Monarchical Principles, and Friends to the Church and the Universities; as in the Case of Sir *William Whitlock* and Sir *William Wyndham* doth appear: And whither this would have went, had not the gallant and unexpected Stand, which was made thereupon by the Honest Gentlemen of the Country Side, broken their Measures and intirely disconcerted them, even when they were confident of a complete Conquest, none can tell; upon which they found the convenient Necessity of purging

purging the House, and secluding from it as many as they did not like, or as would not come into their Measures. This they would have been glad to have done effectually, both by Ejectments of some, and Impeachments of others, to the end this might suppress every thing within-doors, whence they could but suspect any future Opposition to their Designs. But God be praised, tho' they have gone a great way in turning out those who have more Right to sit than many of themselves, yet are there still some left among them, who will not be brought to betray their King and Country, and others, who were misled by them, do now, as we have reason to hope and believe, begin to relent and open their Eyes, by the Barbarities and Cruelties, which they see daily exercised upon a (late) Free People, under a Form of Justice, and for reason of State.

Now, whereas it is the undoubted Right and Privilege of us the People of this Realm, and was accordingly so acknowledged by these very Patricides, before they came themselves to be in Power, that we are not bound to submit to any Power, but what is Legal: And that there are stated Bounds of Parliamentary as well as of Regal Power, according to the known ancient Laws of the Land, that the People may not be oppressed either by one or by the other; we therefore conceive that we are not bound by any of their illegal Acts made, or hereafter to be made, they themselves being the great Transgressors of the Law: And hereby claim and demand for our selves and for our Posterity the Benefit of *Magna Charta*, of the Petition of Right, and of the *Habeas Corpus* Act now invaded; and if there be no other way for rescuing our Country from their form'd Slavery and Oppression, we resolve against all false Traitors with our Lives and Treasure to defend that Right, which the Laws have given us, to the Destruction or Reduction of all these who have attempted, or shall attempt to invade or infringe the same.

And whereas moreover there was an Act made 1^{mo} Gul. & Mar. Declaring the Rights and Liberties of the Subject, and settling the Succession; and another Act made 12^{mo} Gul. for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject, with other Laws and Statutes since confirming the same; We do hereby also claim and demand the Benefit of all these Laws, as being of undisputed Authority to them at least, and of all others made for securing the Establish'd Religion, and the said Rights and Liberties of English-men, against all Invasions and Usurpations of any one whatsoever, Foreigner or Native. And we do, as we are in Duty bound, demand Justice upon all such Invaders and Usurpers of our Rights, and Betrayers of our Religion and Laws, which have been lately most insisted on by themselves, and from which only they have their Power and Being, and do claim now an implicit Faith and Obedience from us who are Free-born, and whose undoubted Right it is even by their own Concessions to assert and vindicate, with Life and Limb, the Ancient Franchises of the Land, which every English-man, by being born in the Land, is born to, and which they have publickly and frequently said not to be in the Power of any one, either to give or take away.

And we do therefore accordingly claim, demand, and insist upon all and singular the said Franchises, Liberties and Rights, as they stand particularly expressed in the Petition of Right, and in the Claim
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of Right made in the Convention of the States in the Year 1688, when there was no King in *England*, upon the Acceptance whereof *William* and *Mary* then Prince and Princess of *Orange* were declared King and Queen of *England*, *France*, and *Ireland*, and they were made a Parliament, whence all succeeding Parliaments and their Laws have derived their Being. And we do moreover claim, demand and insist upon the Original Contract, Compact and Agreement made between the late Princess *Sophia*, and the Heirs of her Body on one Side, and the good People of this Land on the other; and upon all other our Legal Rights, which have been transmitted down to us by the hard Labour, Sweat and Blood of our Ancestors.

And whereas not only the Declaration, That it is not lawful upon any Pretence whatsoever to take Arms against the King hath been repealed, and even stigmatized at a most slavish Position, and thereupon committed to the Flames, as tending directly to an intire Subversion of this Present Settlement, and of the Foundations thereof: But it hath been likewise expressly declared and enacted, that in certain Cases the People of these Realms shall be, and are absolved of their Allegiance, and that a King may abdicate by several Ways, and his Throne become Vacant: We therefore think that we cannot adhere to the Principles of the Revolution, or be true to this very Constitution, as it is established and bounded by several late Statutes; should we at this Time forbear to assert our Natural and Legal Rights against all manner of Opposition, by such Ways and Means as God shall enable us, and as our Duty shall require from us, when other more gentle ones being tried have proved ineffectual, and have but made our Chains the heavier.

This we shall endeavour to do without Regard had to the Difference of Parties, or of Divisions in Religious Matters, which hath been industriously kept up by these wicked Conspirators against their Country, thereby the more easily to enslave us all, both High and Low, both Churchmen and Dissenters, their Design being manifestly laid to engage English Men, who are all equally concern'd to preserve themselves from Foreign Oppression and Tyranny into mutual Quarrellings: That so through their deep Understanding in the Art of governing by Parties, they may be able to bring about their Hellish Devices, and to pour in such a Foreign Force upon us under fair Pretexts, as may be able to crush us all in the End, according to clear and undoubted Precedents for it.

And therefore we have, conforming herein our selves to the Law and Usage of this Nation, bound and associated our selves for the Defence of the Constitution of our English Government, for the redressing of Grievances and Disorders both in Church and State, for the Advancement of our Holy Religion, and for the Amendment of this Realm, and bringing the matters now controverted by the contending Parties to such a Settlement, that all may live easy and happy together under their Rightful and Lawful Prince, and that an End may thereby be put to all the unjust Violences, Depredations and Murthers, which have in a Course of so many Years been committed to the High Dishonour of Almighty God; upon whose Blessing for the Success of this our Righteous Undertaking we stedfastly rely; and our Hope is, that he will make the Justice of our Cause appear as clear as the Sun, by turning the Way of the ungodly and the Oppres-

Oppressor upside Down, and by helping them to Right that suffer Wrong.

Wherefore having this Confidence, we have been moved to publish this Our Declaration, that the Reasons of our appearing at this Time with an Armed Force may be known unto all: And we do hereby invite all Persons whatsoever, if they have but the least Remains in them of the true English Spirit, or of a Sense of Justice and Honour; yea, we do for their own Sakes conjure and require them, if they have any Discernment of Right and Wrong, of Liberty and Slavery, of Truth and Falshood, to come and joyn us in order to the Execution of this Design, that so those Miseries and Calamities may be prevented, which are otherwise to be feared. And as we have no other Intentions, but the Security, Peace, Honour and Happiness of our Native Country, by restoring the Antient Constitution of this Kingdom, and transmitting to our Posterity the best Barrier for their Rights and Liberties: So we cannot but hope that our Brave English Soldiers and Seamen, who see themselves neglected and abused, and *Germans* and *French* more trusted than they, will not easily submit either to be made Slaves themselves, or the Instruments of Slavery to their Fellow Subjects and Country-men, when the Way is now so open for them to assert their own and their Country's just Liberty: But that they will render themselves to the justest Cause in the World, and honourably exert themselves for it, as soon as an Opportunity shall offer; there being no doubt but that they will be suitably rewarded, and encouraged for so doing, by such as shall receive the Benefit thereof.

And we further declare, that we will endeavour to prevent as much as possible the Spilling of any English Blood, in this Dispute for English Rights: And therefore shall have a tender Regard for those of our Country-men, who have been unhappily misled by the Error of the Times. But for Foreigners of any Nation interposing themselves in our Quarrels, and appearing in Arms against our Rightful Cause, they must blame themselves, if they meet not with that Quarter, which we promise to others, or if they should find here no better Treatment than our Brave Ancestors gave the *Danes*, who treacherously had been called over as Guarantees for the Succession.

And we do also Declare in the last Place, that for the restoring of Right, and establishing of our Government upon its Just, Legal and Antient Foundations, Independent of all Foreign Power and Force, we desire no more but that all Matters both of Church and State may be referred to the Consideration of a Free and Legal Parliament.

27 AP 66

Nolumus Leges Angliæ mutari.